

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & HUMAN SERVICES

How the Town Works for You

GOAL

Provide community facilities and human services that are progressive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of the community.

BACKGROUND

Description

Providing suitable, accessible community facilities and services is a principal function of local government, and one that affects the quality of life of every citizen. Therefore, the effectiveness of local government is measured to a great extent by its ability to plan for and finance these facilities adequately.

Town Hall

The Blacksburg town hall is located at the corner of South Main Street and Washington Street. This three-story 20,000 square foot building houses the Town Manager's Office, the Finance Department, the Planning and Engineering Department, and the Town Attorney's Office. Additional

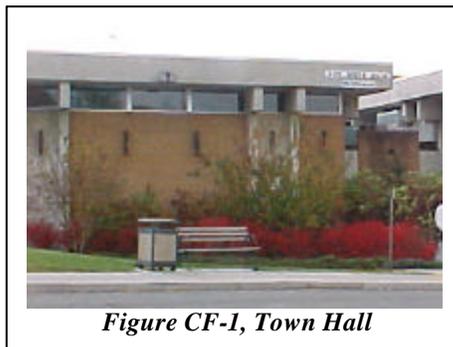


Figure CF-1, Town Hall

space in the town hall is occupied by offices for Blacksburg General District Court, the Town Council Chambers, and the Mayor and Clerk of Council. In addition to Town Council, the Blacksburg General District Court utilizes the Town Council Chambers as its courtroom.

Space in the town hall is limited and new growth cannot be accommodated in the current facility without additional space for personnel, equipment, and meetings. The Town Council Chambers were upgraded on 1999 to better serve current and future needs. Improvements to electronic and audio/visual capabilities allow for more effective use of current audio/visual technology.

Office space in the building is at maximum capacity and additional areas for storage are needed. The building is used to archive many files and plans that are public record. Adequate fireproof storage areas

for these records and maps are needed. Public parking is usually adequate, but shortages do occur when there is a large meeting or when court is in session.

Citizens have expressed an interest in accessing County services from the Blacksburg town hall. In most cases, citizens must travel to Christiansburg to access County services. The existing building space does support current uses, after having been heavily modified, but with the anticipated growth of the population and Town services, new construction or relocation will be needed to support current and future levels of service.

Other Downtown Properties

The town owns a few other facilities and historic structures that are used for various functions. The *Smith House (Five Chimneys)*, which is located at the south corner of Washington Street and Draper Road, currently houses the Town television station, WTOB Channel 2. The *Thomas-Conner House* is located at 104 Draper Road and is leased to Virginia Tech for their Public Administration program. The *Price House and Garden Park*, located at the corner of Wharton and Penn Streets,

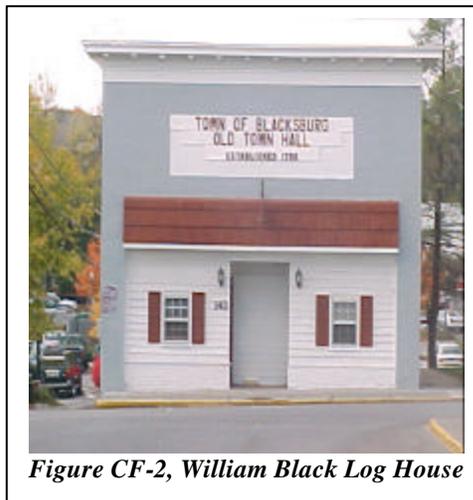


Figure CF-2, William Black Log House

houses the Town's wildlife museum and a prize-winning iris garden. The *Armory*, located at 201 Draper Road, is leased to Virginia Tech and is used as an art gallery and studios. The *William Black Log House (site)*, located at 141 Jackson Street, once housed the Town Hall and is leased to non-profit organizations as needed.

Downtown Master Plan

In the fall of 1992, the town, in conjunction with the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library and Virginia Tech, sponsored an international design competition for the Town Hall complex area. Nearly 200 entries were received from around the world. The Town Council reached a "Preliminary Consensus on Themes and Issues" from all entries and intends for this "consensus" to be a major consideration in the actual development of the complex and the vision and design guidelines for the areas included in the Downtown sector.

In 2001, this vision was updated with the downtown master plan, [Rediscovering the Heart of Blacksburg](#), which incorporates the themes originally identified in the design competition. Downtown remains home to many of the major civic functions of the community, many of its oldest religious institutions, and the largest collection of one-of-a-kind retail offerings in the New River Valley region. Downtown is also the place where the interface of Virginia Tech and the community is most visible. This presents a unique opportunity to capitalize on the assets of being a university town while providing enhanced facilities for all of the citizens of the community.

The master plan makes specific recommendations to strengthen the economic diversity and preserve the unique character of Downtown Blacksburg. Infrastructure improvements to unify the area, to elevate the pedestrian above the automobile, and to maximize use of the town core's limited size with a healthy mixture of land uses, along with economic policies and incentives to encourage appropriate investment in the community are heavily discussed throughout the master plan and this comprehensive plan. The Downtown Master Plan is discussed thoroughly in the *Community Design*, *Transportation*, *Economic Development*, and *Downtown* chapters.

Other issues and themes affecting the community's facilities are:

❖ *Town Hall complex*

The future expansion of the town hall complex is recommended through acquisition of real property along Washington Street at the southwest corner of Draper Road and the commercial block southeast of the town hall fronting on Draper and South Main Street; and eventually, the integration of the urban design concept would be expanded to properties across Main Street.

❖ *Park/Open Area and Bikeway Access*

Provide a park theme along the Draper Road frontage that highlights the Bicentennial Greenway to develop a stronger focal point to the town hall complex. Preserve and enhance the streambed through this park area.

Continue the Bicentennial Greenway through the downtown area and across Henderson Lawn, eventually extending to the historic Bennett property and the Municipal Park.

Develop a green corridor along Miller Street or along Clay Street reaching between South Main Street and the library.

❖ *Streetscape/Pedestrian Orientation*

Develop a pedestrian oriented streetscape with limited building setbacks and parking facilities appropriately landscaped and located to the rear.

Provide continuity and a strong identity with the streetscape.

❖ *Parking*

Develop a parking management authority or hire a private contractor to assist with parking issues in the downtown area.

Replace existing parking signs with brighter signs that more clearly direct traffic to appropriate public parking facilities.

Construct a Donaldson Brown parking structure as a public/private multi-use facility and designate an employee lot for downtown employees.

Police Department Building

The Police Department Building located at the corner of Draper Road and Clay Street was opened in the summer of 1981 and expanded in 1990. The building includes offices for department personnel, a training room, a communications center, a



Figure CF-3, Police Department

temporary detention facility, and an electronic magistrate. The holding cell is capable of holding up to 50 people on a temporary basis. The electronic magistrate allows officers to resume their patrols sooner than in the past. The facility is adequate to serve current needs, but will need to be expanded or moved as the community grows, and law enforcement activities expand. One need for expansion is for police vehicle parking. Some police vehicles must park in spaces that could be reserved for the public because there is not adequate space in the current lot. The Blacksburg Middle School, an addition to the municipal building, or a new building will have to be thoroughly examined in the near future in order to accommodate the expansion of police services for the community.

Fire and Rescue Facilities

There are two facilities located in Town to house emergency services. A joint fire and rescue facility is located at the corner of Progress and Jackson Streets. This facility includes 3 1/2 bays for Fire Department

vehicles and three double and one single bay for Rescue Squad use. Also included in the facility is a small kitchen and lounge area. A second fire station is located on Prices Fork Road just across from the Hethwood Shopping Center. This facility houses only Fire



Figure CF-4, Progress Street Fire Station

Department equipment and has three double drive-through bays. Additional space provided is a combination meeting-dining room-kitchen, a bunkroom with three fold out bunks, three offices, a communications room and a museum. Department personnel have a need for additional storage space for files and educational materials, meeting space, and recreational facilities for on duty volunteers. Adequate room for expansion is not available in existing facilities.

There is recognition that as the town grows, additional fire and rescue facilities will be needed to maintain expected service levels. Options include the addition of bays to the existing Prices Fork Station and the construction of new facilities at the northern and southern ends of Town. Recent discussions have centered on the need for a facility to serve the Corporate Research Center, Virginia Tech Airport and the south end of Town. A longer-term need is to serve North End and Northwest sectors, where residential growth has already occurred and is anticipated in the future. Construction of a new facility in the northern part of Town and improved access to the Prices Fork Station will address this need.

Park and Recreation Facilities

Administrative Building

This structure, formerly the Boatwright house, serves as the administrative office for the Parks and Recreation Department. The director's office, community programs and athletics supervisors, accountant, and administrative support staff occupy the first floor with two community rooms on the second story for recreational programming. The property is a nine-acre addition to the Municipal Park.

Blacksburg Community Center

The Blacksburg Community Center, located at the corner of Patrick Henry Drive and Giles Road, opened in 1982. The facility has a full service gymnasium with two full-size courts, a game room, a computer lab, a weight room, multiple use rooms, locker rooms with shower facilities, and a senior center. The community center and senior

programs supervisors operate from this building and program the center's activities. The center underwent cosmetic and security renovations in 2000. The center is available for community programming and rental use.



Figure CF-5, Blacksburg Community Center

Aquatic Center

The Blacksburg Aquatic Center opened in 1992 and includes a 25-meter indoor pool with a diving area, zero depth entry, a hot tub, saunas and locker rooms. Future phases are planned for the facility and may include aerobics, weight rooms, and daycare accommodations and possibly racquetball courts.



Figure CF-6, Aquatic Center

The relocation of the town's outdoor swimming pool will affect the future facilities and programming needs of this aquatic facility.

Joint Use with Montgomery County Schools

The town utilizes the Winfrey Recreation Fields at Kipps Park, along with the elementary school's gymnasium, for additional programming after school hours. The new Blacksburg Middle School will expand this relationship with additional athletic fields, a trail system, and shared use of the school building including the gymnasium, classroom space, and community labs. The town uses all other elementary school grounds located within Blacksburg for after school and summer camp programs. These facilities are developed through cooperative efforts between the town and the Montgomery County school system.

The Hill Clubhouse

The 2,500 square foot golf course clubhouse provides golf merchandise, snacks, and a lounge for patrons. The clubhouse was constructed in 1995 to support the golf course and outdoor swimming pool operations. In addition to this structure, the town has upgraded the course's other amenities including golf carts, landscaping, and signage with the pool relocating off-site.

Price House

The town's nature center is located in this historic log cabin structure (c. 1840). The center exhibits native wildlife from the area including live animal displays. The outdoor teen supervisor programs the nature center, summer camps, and other townwide, youth and young adult oriented programs from this building. The gardens adjacent to the house highlight a wide variety of irises that bloom around late May.



Figure CF-7, Price House

Public Works Complex

The Public Works Complex is located on Prosperity Road in the Blacksburg Industrial Park and was opened in 1976. It includes the town's central warehouse, an administrative building, a garage, fueling facilities, and several storage buildings. The complex is the base of operations for the Public Works department's Parks & Landscape, Properties, Streets and Utilities divisions, in addition to the Finance department's Purchasing warehouse.

Renovations to the Public Works administration building were completed in 1998 to address changing space needs. A 2000 square foot addition was constructed to consolidate the administrative offices and provide for a new training room. The new training room is approximately 900 square feet and can accommodate groups of up to 50 people. In 2000, the parking lot at the complex was expanded, reconfigured and re-paved to better serve employees and the visiting public. Landscaped islands and a new entrance sign identifying the complex were included in this project. A need also exists for expansion of storage facilities for snow removal equipment. The town's salt spreaders are currently stored in shelters that are inadequate and not designed for this purpose. A new ten bay storage shed is proposed to house and protect the town's salt spreader equipment. As the town grows there will be a need for additional storage facilities at the Public Works Complex. There will also be a need for new satellite maintenance facilities elsewhere in Town to better serve the public.

Westview Cemetery

A Town maintained cemetery is located near downtown on Owens Street near the intersection

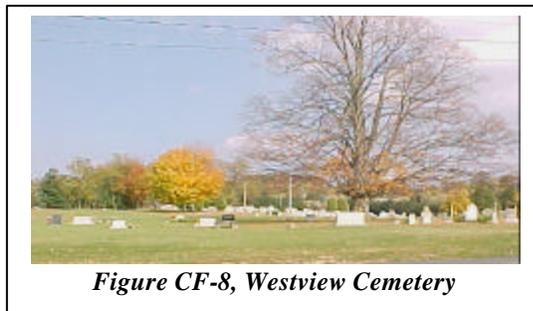


Figure CF-8, Westview Cemetery

with Harding Avenue. Limited space still exists in the cemetery and space for future expansion is available on the site of the existing public gardens and another adjacent Town owned parcel.

Blacksburg Transit

The Blacksburg Transit facility, located on Commerce Street in the Blacksburg Industrial Park, was completed in 1991. The 61,000 square foot facility is state of the art and contains office space, parts storage, maintenance bays and



Figure CF-9, BT Facility

work areas, an automatic bus washer, and indoor parking for thirty buses. The facility also contains conference areas, which are used for employee training and community meetings. There are plans for additional indoor bus parking and office space. These proposed facilities are contingent on state and federal grant funding and will require no direct Town expenditures.

Future Town Properties

The following process is followed by the town for all land acquisitions:

1. Appendix D, the *Property Acquisition Priority List*, is maintained in this comprehensive plan to inventory all projected land acquisition needs.
2. New land acquisition needs are evaluated annually through the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process.
3. The Town Manager prepares a recommended acquisition priority from the *Property Acquisition Priority List* annually and submits this priority list to Town Council for adoption.
4. Projects requiring land acquisition are funded through the Capital Improvement Plan, in the order of priority approved above. The objective is that land acquisition will be followed by construction of the facility or intended use, and public use of the property within a reasonable time frame.
5. Once funding is approved for a project requiring land acquisition, a site selection study is performed. The site selection considers properties that are appropriate and either available or vacant at that time.
6. Pending approval of the site selection by Town Council, negotiations are initiated for land acquisition.

7. Appropriate 15.2-2232 (state mandated comprehensive plan) reviews are accomplished prior to completion of property purchase.
8. The *Property Acquisition Priority List* in the comprehensive plan is amended periodically, but not less frequent than every five years, to identify those needs that have been met either through Town purchase, the development process, or other public or private acquisition.
9. A Town Manager appointed Property Acquisition Team coordinates and manages all land acquisitions.

Educational Facilities

Public Primary and Secondary Schools

The public school system is a primary component of the town. Schools are an area of community focus and a gathering place for both adult and youth activities. Blacksburg's schools are integrated into neighborhoods and many children are able to walk to school. The town's high school ties the community together through high school athletics and cultural events.

The public school system is administered by the Montgomery County School Board. There are six schools in Blacksburg. These are Margaret Beeks Elementary (grades K-5), Gilbert Linkous

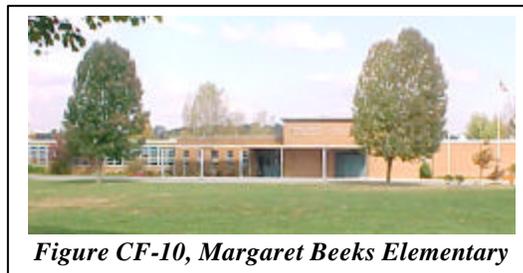


Figure CF-10, Margaret Beeks Elementary

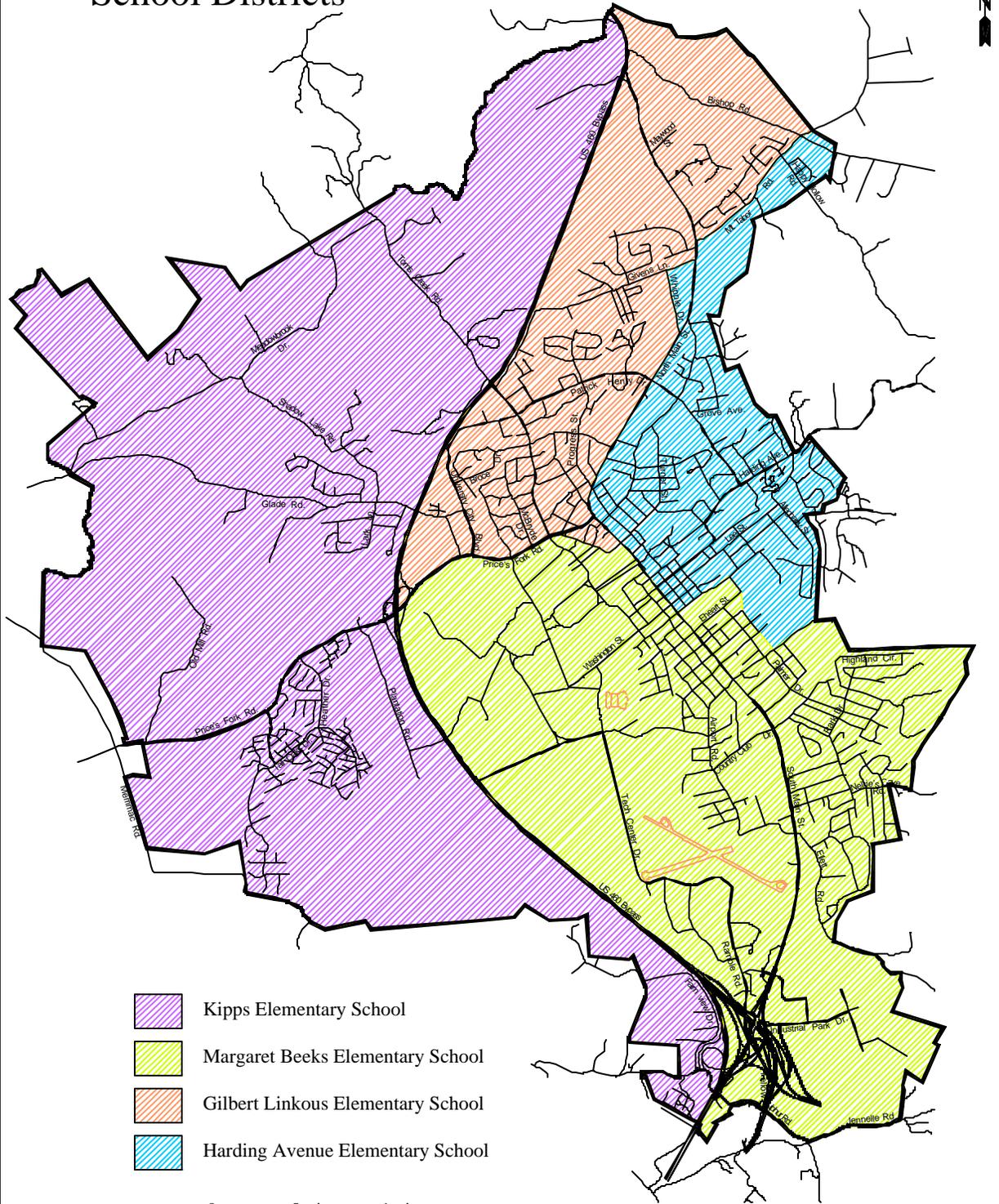
Elementary (grades K-5), Harding Avenue Elementary (grades K-5), Kipps Elementary (grades K-5), Blacksburg Middle School (grades 6-8), and Blacksburg High School (grades 9-12). In addition to the general educational programs that are offered, technical and vocational training is available.

Current Enrollment and Capacity of Blacksburg Schools

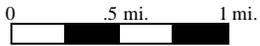
School	2000-2001 Enrollment	Current Capacity
Gilbert Linkous Elementary	300	520
Margaret Beeks Elementary	384	400
Harding Avenue Elementary	229	260
Kipps Elementary	461	480
Blacksburg Middle School	891	540
Blacksburg High School	1,171	1,216

Figure CF-11, Current Capacity and Enrollment of Blacksburg Schools

School Districts



-  Kipps Elementary School
-  Margaret Beeks Elementary School
-  Gilbert Linkous Elementary School
-  Harding Avenue Elementary School



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Town of Blacksburg
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Figure CF-12, Blacksburg School Districts

The construction of Kipps Elementary School relieved overcrowding in the other Blacksburg elementary schools. Likewise, the Blacksburg Middle School is being relocated to a new facility on Prices Fork Road to alleviate overcrowding.



Figure CF-13, Blacksburg Middle School

The former building was occupied beyond its design capacity. The town and Montgomery County School Board are committed to reusing this facility for educational activities. The new middle school is scheduled to open in Fall 2002.

The former middle school building still needs extensive renovations to allow for technological improvements that will ensure a high quality of future educational use. The building is located in close proximity to residential and commercial areas where adults and children live. The Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library is located nearby, allowing for easy access to its resources. Discontinued, civic-oriented use of the school building would remove an important segment of the population from downtown Blacksburg.

Private Schools

In addition to the public schools, various private schools also exist in Blacksburg. These schools offer alternative programs based on their individual educational philosophies, ranging from parent/teacher cooperative education to religious education.

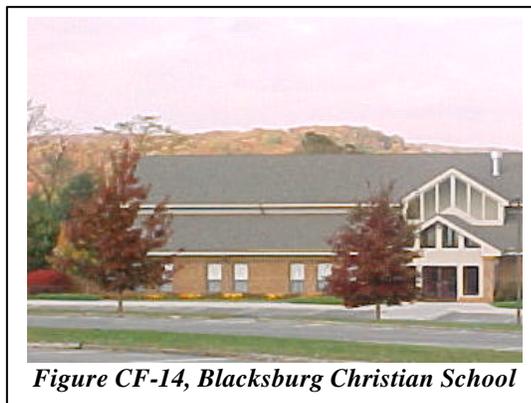


Figure CF-14, Blacksburg Christian School

Private schools in Blacksburg include the Blacksburg New School (K-5), Blacksburg Christian School (infant care-7th grade), Dayspring Christian Academy (K-12), Blacksburg Montessori School (K-12), and Gateway Christian Academy (K-12). None of these schools are currently at capacity and space is available for new students.

Child Day Care

Several day care facilities serve Blacksburg residents who have children below the primary school age. Various providers operate day care facilities, including six commercial day care centers, church

operated facilities, or home day care. Enrollments are high at all of the commercial day care centers in Blacksburg. Space is available for children between the ages of two and five. However, the current demand for infant and toddler care may not be met adequately by these facilities in the near future. As the town's population grows, and more families depend on two incomes to support themselves, the demand for day care centers will increase.

**Blacksburg Commercial Child Care Centers
Enrollment and Capacity**

Day Care Center	2000-2001 Enrollment	Current Capacity	Waiting List
Blacksburg Day Care	105	110	All groups
Carousel Learning Center	85	90	Infants, Toddlers
Noah's Ark	63	125	None
Rainbow Riders	160	160	All groups
Mt. Tabor	82	90	Infants, Toddlers
Children's Nest	115	122	All groups

Figure CF-15, Blacksburg Commercial Child Care Centers Enrollment and Capacity

Higher Education

Blacksburg is the home of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), the state's largest institution of higher education with more than 26,000 students. Virginia Tech's eight colleges offer bachelor degrees in more than 71 fields of study and masters and doctoral degrees in 147 programs of study – more than any other institution in the Commonwealth. Other educational institutions in the region include Radford University and New River Community College, located in Dublin.



*Figure CF-16, Alumni Hall,
Virginia Tech*

Community Libraries

The Blacksburg Branch of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library was expanded and improved in 1996. The current library includes about 66,000 volumes and 198 periodicals. The library is fully wired for searching electronic databases and has Ethernet access to the Internet. The library has generous space for reading, a large meeting room, and a story hour room.



Figure CF-17, Blacksburg Library

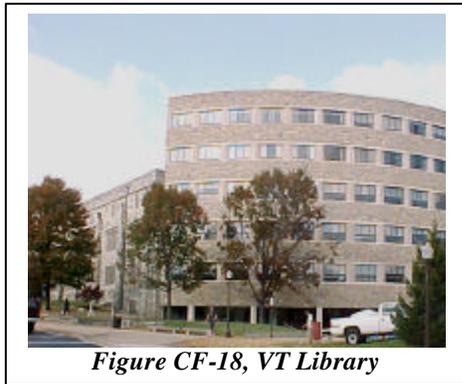
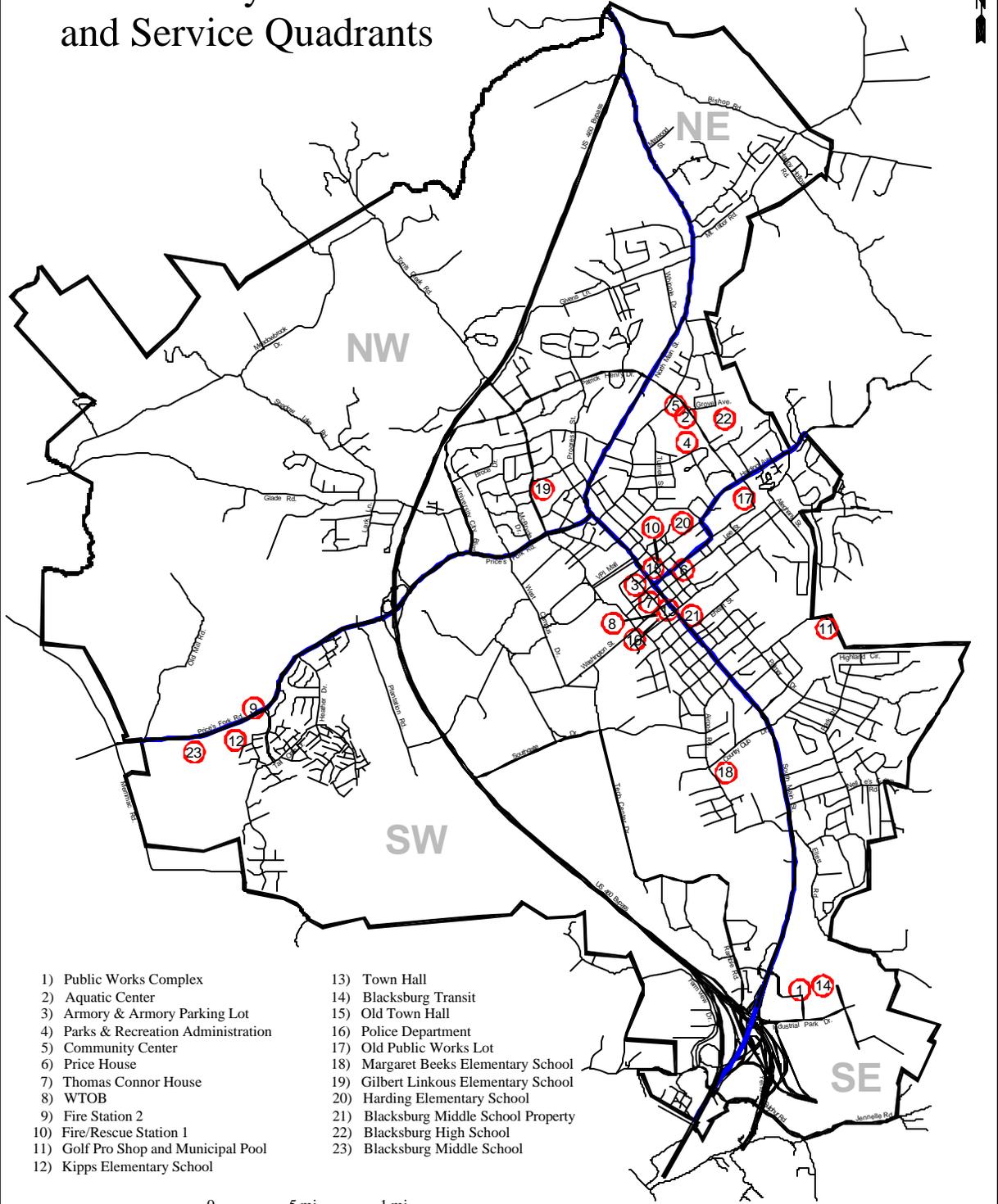


Figure CF-18, VT Library

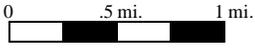
The Virginia Tech Library, located on the Virginia Tech Campus, is open to Blacksburg citizens. The Virginia Tech Library is the largest library in the state, with over two million volumes, 18,000 current serials, and one of the nations largest microform collections. The library is a selective depository for federal documents and is an invited member of the

Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The Virginia Tech Library has about 1.5 million users annually (<http://www.lib.vt.edu>).

Community Facilities and Service Quadrants



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Public Works Complex | 13) Town Hall |
| 2) Aquatic Center | 14) Blacksburg Transit |
| 3) Armory & Armory Parking Lot | 15) Old Town Hall |
| 4) Parks & Recreation Administration | 16) Police Department |
| 5) Community Center | 17) Old Public Works Lot |
| 6) Price House | 18) Margaret Beeks Elementary School |
| 7) Thomas Connor House | 19) Gilbert Linkous Elementary School |
| 8) WTOB | 20) Harding Elementary School |
| 9) Fire Station 2 | 21) Blacksburg Middle School Property |
| 10) Fire/Rescue Station 1 | 22) Blacksburg High School |
| 11) Golf Pro Shop and Municipal Pool | 23) Blacksburg Middle School |
| 12) Kipps Elementary School | |



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Figure CF-19, Blacksburg Community Facilities

Health and Social Services

Montgomery Regional Hospital

The Montgomery Regional Hospital, located on U.S. Route 460 just within the southern limits of Blacksburg, is a fully accredited, 126-bed facility that opened in 1971. The hospital is a member of HCA, headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee. The hospital has 24-hour, seven day a week emergency capacity, is fully staffed with 193 physicians on staff. These physicians provide services in 31 medical fields.



Figure CF-20, Montgomery Regional Hospital

New River Valley Medical Center

The Carilion New River Valley Medical Center located in Radford is also available for use by the citizens of Blacksburg. Radford Community Hospital is run by Carilion Health System, which owns a network of health care facilities throughout the New River and Roanoke Valley area. Carilion also has a family medicine facility at the corner of Prices Fork and Plantation Roads. The facility provides primary care with a comprehensive range of diagnostic and lab services as well as outpatient psychiatric care and home health care services.

[Virginia Department of Health](#)

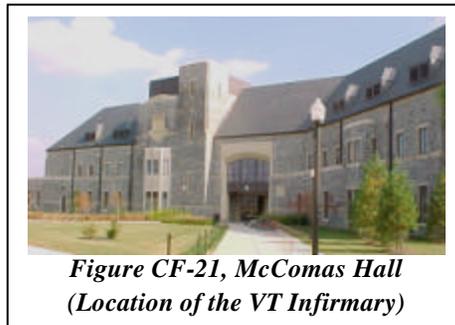
The Montgomery County Health Department and [New River District Office](#) of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) are located together in Christiansburg at 210 Pepper Street. The services of the department are available to all County residents, including Blacksburg residents. Some of the services include childcare information, maternity programs, immunizations, and family planning.

[Free Clinic of the New River Valley](#)

The Free Clinic of the New River Valley provides high quality primary, specialty, dental, and pharmaceutical care to residents of the New River Valley who lack health insurance, and who are low-income. Established in 1981, the Free Clinic is a private, 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides over \$1.5 million dollars in health care to 2,600+ patients each year. Services are provided primarily through the generous donation of time and expertise of over 450 local professional health and lay volunteers.

Other Health Facilities

The Virginia Tech Infirmary provides student health care and education. Saint Albans Psychiatric Hospital is located in nearby Radford and is available for use by Blacksburg residents. There are also various private physicians available in Town to serve a variety of health care needs.



[Virginia Department of Social Services](#)

The Virginia Department of Social Services works to promote self-reliance, prevention, and protection by serving as a catalyst for healthy families and communities. The Town of Blacksburg is served by the Montgomery County Department of Social Services, which is located in Christiansburg and supports the entire county. The services provided are generally designed for low-income persons. At present the department offers services in three broad areas: Income Maintenance Programs, such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and food stamps; Family and Child Services, such as child protective services, adoption, and referral programs; and Adult Services such as adult protective services, general counseling, and referral.

The Virginia Department of Social Services' Division of Community Programs provides services and opportunities to strengthen Virginia's communities as well as its residents. Its Neighborhood Assistance Program offers tax incentives to encourage public and private donations made to non-profit organizations whose main function is providing assistance to economically deprived citizens. Additionally, the Office of Newcomer Services helps refugees and their families achieve self-sufficiency and successful integration into their new communities.

[New River Community Action, Inc.](#)

New River Community Action, Inc. (NRCA) is a nonprofit organization that provides an extensive array of services to the counties of Montgomery, Giles, Floyd, Pulaski, and the City of Radford. The following services and organizations are administered by the NRCA: Head Start, Share, Cars for Work, Homeless Intervention Program (H.I.P.), Screening for Weatherization, Teen/Parent support fund, and Child and Adult Clothing Banks. NRCA also lends support and can refer those in need to other organizations.

In addition to the Montgomery County Social Services Department and the NRCA there are numerous additional organizations and groups providing social services to the residents of Montgomery County. Citizens may contact the [Montgomery County Public Information Office](#) for information on the various social and human service agencies.

Opportunities

- ◆ The municipal building and police station in the downtown provide a central location for citizens to access Town services.
- ◆ The Municipal Park groups many recreational facilities in a single location and provides for a variety of activities.
- ◆ Several cultural and arts centers such as the Lyric Theatre, Armory Art Gallery, and Haymarket Theater are already established in the downtown area.
- ◆ Public works activities are grouped in a central location.
- ◆ Blacksburg Transit is housed in a state of the art facility, which provides adequate space for current transit needs and space for many Town meetings and activities.
- ◆ Citizens have access to the largest library in the state on the Virginia Tech campus, and the Blacksburg branch of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library is one of the few in the nation providing full Internet access.
- ◆ Quality hospital care is provided within Town limits.
- ◆ Many social services are available for those in need from the county government, private, and non-profit organizations.
- ◆ An opportunity exists to use schools as multi-use facilities like Kipps Elementary and the new and old middle school buildings.
- ◆ The town has retained many key civic institutions and has a master plan for the downtown area including a conceptual plan for the municipal center. In addition, new civic uses such as the Farmers Market and the rehabilitated Lyric Theatre have been successful in attracting people downtown.

Challenges

- ◆ The municipal building is occupied beyond design capacity.
- ◆ There is a shortage of indoor exhibit areas to support antique shows and other events.
- ◆ There is a deficit of indoor recreational facilities, particularly courts and exercise rooms.
- ◆ Limited public art displays in Town and uncertainty about where a new fine arts facility might be constructed by the university.
- ◆ There is a townwide deficit of outdoor recreation facilities, particularly athletic fields.
- ◆ Montgomery County has no plan for the location of future school sites in Town.
- ◆ There are too few child day care facilities in the town and surrounding area.
- ◆ While there is a concentration of community facilities downtown, there is no unifying architectural symbol that defines the town.

What is Changing

As existing community facilities age, maintenance becomes more important and renovations may be required to maintain service levels that meet citizen expectations. Many existing facilities must be retrofitted to meet current building codes, accessibility requirements, and other recommended standards.

The town hall complex is at capacity both in the town hall building and the police station. Renovations and additions have increased original capacities well beyond their maximums and there is no more room left for further expansion without extensive construction. A new town hall is needed within the next ten to fifteen years with interim plans for relocating town offices to accommodate growth over this period. An additional building directly adjacent, and connected, to the existing municipal building or utilization of other adjacent properties may be feasible. This development should occur as a key phase in the implementation of the Downtown Master Plan and will address the town's long term operational needs as well as provide an attractive main entrance into the downtown.

The downtown middle school site should remain a center of activity for the town. This structure should be fully programmed and civic oriented such as with, but not limited to, recreational, cultural, educational, or administrative uses. The key is to utilize the site to its full potential and not let it become vacant space. It is a vital component of the town's downtown area.

As the primary and secondary school student population continues to grow, greater stress will be placed on existing school facilities. A challenge for the future will be to help the Montgomery County School Board anticipate potential facility needs and to plan new facilities so that they are seamlessly integrated into the community. The joint use of all public facilities, particularly schools, with other compatible civic uses such as recreation will maximize the use and cost efficiency of public education facilities in the community.

A current societal trend towards smaller government makes it difficult to project the need for future community facilities. Local governments are caught in the paradox of this demand for smaller government coupled with citizen demands for more services. The reduction of the federal and state government compounds the problem by placing more responsibility on local governments to administer programs and provide services. Local government must provide community facilities in an efficient manner that is responsive to its citizen's desires.

GENERAL POLICIES

- ❑ Retain civic activity centers downtown, such as the Farmers Market, the Lyric Theatre, and the town hall complex.
- ❑ Provide facilities to meet existing and anticipated community needs (e.g., recreational, day care, educational, etc.).
- ❑ Utilize cutting edge technology to address the needs of an expanding community and to enhance the provision of services.
- ❑ Pursue private and governmental partnerships to provide joint use facilities that address the needs of the greater Blacksburg community.
- ❑ Develop the downtown central common for assembly, public recreation, and festival uses.
- ❑ Provide multiple downtown gathering spaces for all walks of life.
- ❑ Support the provision of cultural facilities and public art.

- ❑ Provide public facilities that serve as examples of the desired development quality in Town.
- ❑ Ensure adequate facilities for storage and maintenance of equipment.

ACTION STRATEGIES

in general

- Work cooperatively with Virginia Tech to plan for potential university growth and development.
- Work with Montgomery County Schools, Virginia Tech, and other public agencies to develop shared facilities and provide joint use of existing facilities.
- Consider privatization or re-engineering of local government functions and services before expanding government provided services.
- Consider all alternatives and develop a justification of need with community input before facility expansion is proposed.
- Maintain Town facilities according to their level of service and in a manner consistent with the community's high level of expectation.
- Exhibit innovative design and high quality construction when planning and building or rehabilitating Town facilities to set an example for the development community to follow.

within 5 years

- Establish level of service standards for all basic public services.
- Plan for the creation of a Blacksburg History Museum.
- Work with Virginia Tech to beginning planning for future facilities along the town and university borders, such as the proposed fine arts center and a parking/commercial/residential complex.
- Develop a master plan for the town's current and future recreational and cultural needs.
- Establish a public safety training center for police, fire, and rescue personnel.

- Site a shared Fire and Rescue Station in south end of Town.
- Develop a proactive program to re-locate above ground utilities underground.
- Create an attractive South Main Street entrance to Town through appropriate development and beautification projects.
- Position Blacksburg to be on the leading edge of current technology through the implementation of e-government initiatives and electronic interaction with citizens.
- Pursue E-government initiatives that would create an "electronic clerk" to provide access to County services in town.
- Ensure that the downtown middle school building continues to be fully programmed for educational use or, if not feasible, other civic oriented uses.
- Work on a formal agreement with Virginia Tech that would allow Blacksburg residents access to recreational and other community oriented facilities similar to the university's library policy with the town.
- Develop attractive, useable public spaces downtown that promote public art and include a central plaza area for people to gather and as a site for community entertainment.
- Identify all high traffic pedestrian crossings and properly construct, sign, and light cross walks at those locations.
- Develop a plan designating future school sites in Blacksburg and a set of location and development criteria these sites should meet.
- Examine current uses of Town owned buildings such as the Thomas-Conner House and Price House and determine how they can be fully utilized as Town facilities.
- Study existing and future space requirements in the municipal building and make long range plans for building additions or relocating offices.
- Develop a Town Hall complex design including recommendations from the Downtown Master Plan and Municipal Complex Design Competition.
- Identify future equipment and storage needs at the Public Works Lot.

- Construct a new ten-bay storage shed to house and protect the town's salt spreader equipment and similar assets.

within 25 years

- Study options for and construct additional multi-use recreational facilities as identified in the town's Recreation Master Plan.
- Study the need for expansion of the existing cemetery in Town.
- Acquire/complete the construction of a new town hall complex.
- Complete implementation of the Downtown Master Plan.
- Construct the northern Fire and Rescue facility, possibly a Public Safety Center.
- Re-grade Henderson Lawn to improve its ability to serve as a public gathering space.
- Develop a community exhibition facility. This facility could occur in conjunction with future uses at the former Blacksburg Middle School site or along with the proposed university fine arts facility.

beyond 25 years

- Identify and promote appropriate locations for local campgrounds and other outdoors, recreation-oriented facilities near Town.
- Identify and plan for remaining public safety infrastructure needs for the town's future.
- Identify all critical infrastructure improvements needed in the future.